(e) and (f) Capacity utilisation of all the nitrogenous plants in the public sector put together has been low mainly on account of very poor capacity utilisation of the old and sick units of the Fertilizer Corportion of India Ltd. (FCI) and the Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. (HFC). Both FCI and HFC have been declared as sick companies by the BIFR who have directed Government to submit unit-wise revival proposal after examining all the available options. In the case of phasphatic plants, there was a slowing down of production, leading to low capacity utilisation, due to reduced off-take on account of increase in prices after the decontrol. However, things have improved in the recent past and the phosphatic plants in all the sectors have shown much better results in the current financial year. The capacity utilisation of nitrogenous and phosphatic plants in the public sector during the first eleven months of the current financial year was 90.6 per cent and 87.0 per cent, respectively.

Sick fertilizer units

2888. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of fertilizer producing units which have gone sick during the last three years;

(b) the reasons for their sickness; and

(c) the steps taken to waive these sick units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) and (b) In so far as public sector units are concerned, two fertilizer producing public sector companies, namely, Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFC) and Fertilizer Corporation of India Limited (FCI) have been declared sick by the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) under the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Act, 1985.

The main reasons of sickness of HFC and FCI are technological deficiencies, inadequacies in systems designs, frequent equipment breakdowns, ageing of plants, power shortages etc.

(c) For both HFC and FCI the BIFR has directed the Government to submit revival proposals as the promotor. The future of these companies would depend on the outcome of proceedings pending before BIFR, which in a quasi-judicial authority.

Under utilisation of FP&ARD

2889. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:
SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:

Will the Minister of CHEMICALS & FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the infrastructure of Fertilizer Promotion & Agricultural Reserch Division (FP & ARD) under Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation (HFC) is not being fully utilised, due to which balanced use of fertilizer has been greatly eroded causing damage to the soil fertility to a great extent;

(b) if so, what are the future plans of Government for utilisation of FP & ARD for this purpose.

(c) whether it is a fact that FP&ARD under HFC have so far executed Dryland Farming Project from 1976 to 1988. Indo-British Fertilizer Educational Project from 1981 to 1993 and Rainfed Farming Project in West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa, funded by United Kingdom, from November, 1988 till-date;

(d) if so, how much area they could cover in those projects so far and year-wise plan of coverage of further areas; and

(e) the reasons for not utilising the experience of FP&ARD by the Ministry on an all India scale specially in view of the growing imbalance in the use of fertilizers?